

BOOK REVIEWS

A QUINARY OF BOOKS*

Introduction to Zoology. Theodore H. Savory. Illustrated by Melchior Spoczynski. Philosophical Library Inc., New York. 1968. \$6.00.

The Pocket Encyclopedia of Plant Galls. Arnold Darlington. Illustrated by M. J. D. Hirons. Philosophical Library Inc., New York. 1968. \$7.50.

Earth's Bug-eyed Monsters. Alice L. Hopf. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York. 1968. \$4.50.

Six-legged Science. Brian Hocking. Schenkman Publishing Co. Inc., Cambridge, Mass. 1968. \$4.50.

A Guide to Spiders and Their Kin. Herbert W. and Lorna R. Levi, under the editorship of Herbert S. Zim. Illustrated by Nicholas Strekalovsky. Golden Press, New York. 1968. \$1.00.

The editorial office of the Journal has recently received five small books which should receive the courtesy of a review although not all of them will be of interest to the readers of **The Journal**.

The first of these, **Introduction to Zoology**, is a pocket-size text of systematic zoology. Aside from a few pages on the principles of classification it consists of an outline of the taxonomy of animals down to ordinal rank, with compact descriptive text. Since the author is an Englishman it is natural that his classification should be based on British revisions and differ somewhat from ours; but one can't help but be surprised that although the author uses the old classification of the Protozoa he makes no mention of the many revisions of that old phylum, and that he treats the Rotifera as one homogeneous group, making no attempt at ordinal division. Under the Insecta eighteen orders are briefly described. One can accept, in so small a book, the lumping of the Homoptera and Heteroptera, but not the complete omission of fourteen of the conservatively accepted thirty-two orders. For example, I can find no mention of the Plecoptera or any of the neuropteroids.

The Pocket Encyclopedia of Plant Galls, one of the natural history books in the Blandford Colour Series, is a beautiful little book that should inspire some American naturalist to do as well by our American galls for, alas, the galls here described are all from the British Isles. The general discussion of the collecting and preserving of galls, the rearing and culturing of the causative agents, and the nature of the irritants applies universally however; and the 293 color illustrations show that the majority of the galls have their nearly identical counterparts in this country and that their causative agents often differ only in species. Following the color section there are seventy pages of descriptions of representative British galls arranged in the systematic order of their host plants. The combination of all of these features makes this book valuable to anyone interested in galls from a less technical side than that presented in the publications of Kinsey or of Felt.

* With apologies to James Lipton, author of *An Exaltation of Larks*.

The title, **Earth's Bug-eyed Monsters**, must have been selected by some office-bound editor, for the Portuguese-man-of-war, the Giant Octopus, the Road Runner and the Pitcher Plant scarcely fall into such a category. The browser in the book shop will not be attracted particularly to this book; nor will today's child, bombarded by oversize, psychedelic illustrations find that the appearance of the book matches the lure of the strange and fearsome creatures mentioned in the jacket blurb. This is unfortunate because the book contains a great deal of interesting and carefully garnered information about these twenty possible prototypes of science fiction monsters. Mrs. Hopf writes easily and in a pleasant conversational manner, showing evidence on every page of her wide perusal of the popular accounts of these species. In attributing to moths the ability to hear the cry of bats she need not have shown so much caution, for as a member of the New York Entomological Society she has heard many first-hand accounts of the relationship between the two; but it is more prudent to be cautious than dogmatic. Her book should be in every Junior High and Senior High library where, once discovered, it will be in great demand. The twenty-one black and white photographs are unspectacular but, from my point of view, this is to their credit.

Six-legged Science is a small, simple, but highly literate book much of which was originally prepared for radio or television use. Kipling's *Elephant Child*, with its 'satiating curiosity, serves as the introduction to the use of parallels in explaining the structure, physiology and habits of insects. Teachers of children will find this book valuable, and many parents will enjoy it for the expertise it will give them in appearing knowledgeable before their science-educated children. Puns and alliteration, limerick and verse, anecdote and literary illusion enliven the book. Many times, while reading it, I said to myself: "I wish I had said that"; and "yes, my dear Professor Hocking, I will."

Spiders, another of the Golden Nature Guide series, will make you want to run right out and find a spider to identify. If, as the authors say, there are 30,000 species of spiders in the world, we do not expect every one to be described in this vest-pocket paperback. But nearly 400 species, all looking very lively, are illustrated in color, as are 30 species of scorpions, 21 harvesters, 17 mites, 15 ticks, 26 myriopods and 8 land crustaceans—quite an array for so small a book. A few structural characters and a sampling of nests and webs are also illustrated. I haven't yet caught a spider so I don't know how easy the task of matching animal with picture will be nor what the comparative chances are that the spider I catch in New York or in Timbuctoo will be illustrated at all. Of the some two dozen species of spiders with which I am acquainted most were recognizably illustrated; only the *Arctosas* were disappointing. With the scorpions and myriopoda, however, I had to be content with the ordinal name. The authoritative position of the authors among arachnologists assures us of the accuracy of the tremendous amount of material capsulated here; and the attractive format will make all who see the book, adults and children alike, want to collect and learn more about spiders—and their kin.

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